

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 03/09/07
Agenda Item: 9

To: BEACON Board of Directors
From: Technical Director
Date 02/28/07

Subject: Army Corps Section 227 Project, Oil Piers Reef.

REQUIRED ACTION:

- a. Receive and File Project Update Report

DISCUSSION:

Under the National Shoreline Erosion Control Development Program, Section 227, the US Corps of Engineers funds projects that demonstrate innovative methods for shoreline protection through the continental US. For Southern California, proposals of such innovations were received in November 2002 and in August 2003 a contract was awarded to ASR Ltd. to perform final design on an innovative beach protection project at Oil Piers Beach in Ventura County.

The selected project entails the installation of an artificial reef consisting of geotextile (woven plastic) containers that will be stretched out across the sea-bottom and pumped full of sand. The wedge-shaped reef will stretch about 400 feet along the beach and will be located offshore in about 20 feet of water. The top of the reef will just about reach the water surface at extreme low tide. The purpose of the reef is two-fold: to enhance the width of the beach behind the reef and to create a surfing break across the top of the reef.

The following activities have occurred on this project to date:

1. December 2002 – Conceptual design was completed.
2. August 2003 – USCOE awards contract to ASR Ltd to design, fabricate, and install the artificial reef at the site.
3. January 2004 – Final design completed.
4. June 2004 – As the local sponsor, BEACON entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the USCOE setting forth project responsibilities for the two entities.
5. January 2005 – Joint CEQA/NEPA Environmental Document approved by BEACON Board.
6. October 2005 – USCOE receives permit from Regional Water quality Control Board.

Future Required Milestones:

- Funding for installation of the artificial reef secured.
- USCOE awards fabrication/installation contract



A California Joint Powers Agency

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- State Lands Commission and BEACON Board approve new State Lands Lease.
- California Coastal Commission issues permit.
- USCOE issues permit.

Funding and Water Resources Development Act (WDRA)

Funding for the design and environmental work related to the Oil Piers project was provided by the US Corps of Engineers with obligated Section 227 funds. Funding for fabrication and installation, estimated at approximately \$3 M, still requires a funding appropriation from Section 227 funds.

However, the Section 227 Program expired in October 2006 and requires re-authorization. Currently, this re-authorization is included in the pending Water Resources Development Act (WDRA) Bill. Approval of the WRDA Bill has been delayed and is judged to have an even probability for approval in 2007. Without WRDA approval and a subsequent funding appropriation, the Oil Piers project can not be fabricated or installed.

In January 2007, staff met with USCOE and the BEACON lobbyist to define options of how to proceed in light of the delayed WDRA bill. This effort resulted in the identification of two approaches.

Option A.

- Wait till WRDA gets approved.
- While we wait for WRDA to get approved, pursue a Congressional Add and/or a Federal Earmark for FY08 funding for Oil Piers (\$3 M).
- Under this approach, if successful in obtaining FY08 funding for Oil Piers, then once WRDA is approved and Section 227 is re-authorized, the Oil Piers project can immediately secure a funding obligation and begin fabrication.

Option B.

- Not wait for WRDA approval.
- Pursue a Congressional Add and/or a Federal Earmark for FY08 funding for Oil Piers (\$3 M) plus language to re-authorize Section 227.
- Under this approach, if successful in obtaining FY08 funding and re-authorization for Section 227, then the Oil Piers project can immediately secure a funding obligation and begin fabrication. If only FY08 funding is secured then we revert to the Option A outcome and need to wait for WRDA approval.

It was agreed to proceed with the more aggressive Option B. Specifically, the County of Ventura, County of Santa Barbara and BEACON have all submitted to our congressional representatives in Washington, requests for funding of the Oil Piers project and re-authorization of Section 227. Assuming this effort is successful and/or that WDRA does get approved by the end of 2007, the earliest that the Oil Piers project could be installed would be Summer 2008.